SCs/STs In Judicial and Quasi-Judicial Administration

2369. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Forum of SC/ST Parliamentarians in the representations submitted to the Prime Minister of 17th December, 1996, 1st September, 1997 and 23rd July, 1998 have demanded posting/placement of persons belonging to the SCs/Sts in important posts/assignments in the higher echelons of Judicial and Quasi-Judicial administration; and

(b) the total number of Judges serving in Supreme Court and all the High Courts as on today and number of persons belonging to SCs/ SGs among them and their percentage as compared to the total number?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) Representations are received from time to time demanding representation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the Higher judiciary. Since appointments of Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are made under articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons, information is not maintained separately for caste or class etc.

The Government have, however, addressed letters to the Chief Ministers of the States and the Chief Justices of the High Courts from time to time requesting them *inter-alia* to locate persons from the Bar belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who are suitable for appointment as High Court Judges.

As on August 9, 2001, the number of Judges serving in the Supreme Court and the High Courts was as follows:

(i)	Supreme Court	—	24
(ii)	High Courts	—	470

As regards appointment of persons belonging to Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes to quasi-judicial administration, information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.